

# What Utahns Earn

## *New Occupational Wage Information Released*



**T**he highest-paid professions in Utah in 2006 were doctors, dentists, lawyers, and engineering managers. The state's lowest-paid positions included counter attendants in food service, food preparation workers, ushers, dishwashers, and fast-food cooks.

This information is from the annual Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, which produces estimates of wages for workers in about 600 occupations and nine areas in Utah. Some 4,000 employers are surveyed annually to collect this important information.

The highest-paid workers in Utah are in the medical field, with anesthesiologists averaging \$91.91 per hour and ob/gyns at \$88.88. Other types of physicians earned from \$60.00 to \$80.00 or more per hour. Engineering managers averaged \$46.18 per hour with lawyers reporting \$51.35 per hour.

Hourly rates for the lowest-paid included mostly service workers, such as: counter attendants, who made \$7.20 per hour, combined food preparation and serving workers at \$7.29 per hour, dishwashers with \$7.36 per hour and sewers at \$7.63 per hour.

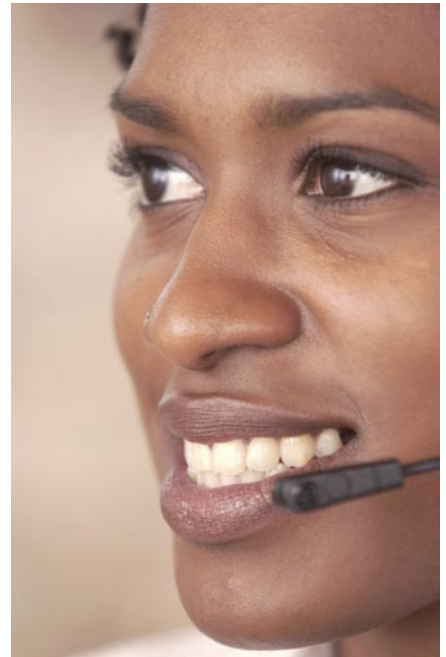
The bulk of workers fall in between the highest- and lowest-paid. Here are the average wages for some recognizable occupations not in the highest- or lowest-paid list, but those we all can identify with:

Accountants and auditors	\$26.76
Automotive service technicians and mechanics	16.57
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	13.62
Carpenters	15.70
Cashiers	8.33
Child care workers	7.88
Computer programmers	32.80
Dental hygienists	29.60
Pharmacists	45.47
Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	20.65
Registered nurses	26.24
Retail salespersons	11.38
Secretaries, except legal, medical, and executive	12.71
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks	12.12
Telemarketers	9.37
Truck drivers, heavy and tractor-trailer	18.92

Wages vary by geographic area. The pay figures above are statewide averages. Wage information is available for nine geographic areas\* in Utah. For instance, registered nurses made \$26.02 per hour in the Provo-Orem area compared to \$27.04 per hour in Salt Lake City.

The types of wage data include the inexperienced wage, average wage, median wage, and the middle range of wages for each occupation. Which wage measure should you use? For the newly employed, with little or no experience, you would obviously use the "inexperienced" wage. For someone with experience and training, use the average or median wage. The average is the wage weighted by employment in the occupation. When the wages of all persons in an occupation are ordered from lowest to highest, the median wage is simply the wage of the middle worker in that occupation and the middle range of wages is the wage range for the middle 50 percent of workers.

You can get wage rates two ways. One is by accessing the wage tables (available online at <http://jobs.utah.gov/opencms/wi/regions/local.html>). These are alphabetical listings of occupations with wages by geographic



area. The other method is a customer-driven computer access through the Department of Workforce Services Web site's Utah Economic Data Viewer (UEDV) at <http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoOccwage.do>.

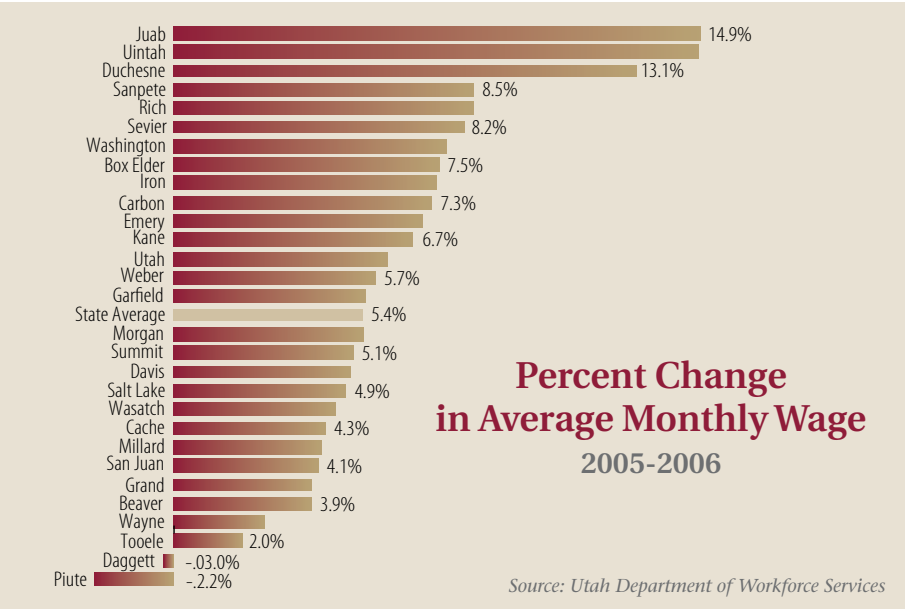
**How Much Did Wages Go Up In Utah Last Year?**

This is a question that frequently comes up as employers seek to stay competitive in the labor market. They want to know how much to budget

for their next year's business plan. The best data that portrays the changing of wages in the state is not survey data but is grounded comprehensive wage and salary summations from the required reporting of virtually all employers to the Department of Workforce Services. This information originates from the quarterly unemployment insurance contributions reports from some 80,000 worksites in the state. The accompanying chart shows the percent change between 2005 and 2006 in the average wage by county in Utah. The increases

shown reflect the current tight labor market, with unemployment very low and wages being bid up for workers in demand. The overall increase in wages was 5.4 percent. This was up from about 3.5 percent in the proceeding two years. ⓘ

*\*Box Elder and Rich Counties, Central and Western Rural Counties, Eastern Rural Counties, Logan Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), Ogden-Clearfield MSA, Provo-Orem MSA, St. George MSA, Salt Lake City MSA, and Southwestern Rural Counties.*



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